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USE BIOLOGICAL METHODS TO COMBAT AGRICULTURAL PESTS

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Natural enemies, both predatory and parasitic, are now being used to combat many agricultural pests. This is the so-called biological method.

The Quarantine Laboratory for Plant Protection has developed a biological method of combating the Comstock beetle, which causes tree plantings great damage. The method consists of propagating the pseudoficus, which is a parasite of the Comstock beetle.

In one summer, the millions of offspring produced by one female pseudoficus can destroy huge numbers of the Comstock beetle. During the first year, the pseudoficus kills so many beetles that the beetle is no longer dangerous to plants.

When infected by the pseudoficus, the beetle hides in cracks, hollows, under loose bark of trees, in fallen leaves, or in the soil, and dies. In areas where the pseudoficus accumulates, it should be gathered in cocoons and placed in diseased trees, allowing 50-100 cocoons per 5-10 trees. The cocoons gathered should not have been perforated, since the perforations show that the pseudoficus has flown out of the cocoon.

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